



State of Wisconsin
Department of Health and Family Services

Jim Doyle, Governor
Helene Nelson, Secretary

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For Immediate Release

**NINE COUNTY CONSORTIUM IN NORTHWESTERN WISCONSIN RECEIVES
\$100,000 FAMILY CARE GRANT**

*Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, Price, Rusk, Sawyer and Washburn
Counties to Build Long Term Care Partnership*

ASHLAND— The Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services today awarded a \$100,000 grant to a nine county partnership in northwestern Wisconsin to develop a plan to expand the successful Family Care program that gives seniors and people with disabilities the choice to get long term care in their own homes and communities as an alternative to nursing home care. Governor Jim Doyle unveiled plans in his annual State of the State address Tuesday to expand the Family Care program statewide within 5 years.

“Seniors and people with disabilities overwhelmingly prefer home and community care options to nursing homes when possible,” said Helene Nelson, Secretary of the Department of Health and Family Services. “Family Care has proven people can get the long-term care they need and prefer, and that this can save money for taxpayers by helping people stay healthy and independent.”

Secretary Nelson was in Ashland today to award the Family Care Planning Grant to Northwest Wisconsin Long Term Care Options (NW-LTCO), a public/private partnership that involves nine counties and three private organizations: Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, Price, Rusk, Sawyer and Washburn counties and Community Health Partnership, Inc., Group Health Partnership, Inc., and The Management Group, Inc.

The Governor’s goal is to eliminate all waitlists for home and community-based care over five years as Family Care expands across the State. While Wisconsin has been a national leader in offering community-based alternatives to nursing home care, about 11,500 people are on waitlists for community care statewide.

There are currently a total of 738 people in the nine-county area on a waiting list for community care.

Family Care is a successful pilot program in five counties in Wisconsin. A recent evaluation of Family Care found that it saved an average of \$452 per person per month in total Medical Assistance expenditures in the four non-Milwaukee counties during 2003 and 2004. It did so by helping people stay healthy and more independent in their homes and communities. Family Care also saved money in Milwaukee.

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